

In the Claims

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in this patent application:

Claims 1 to 9 (canceled).

10. (currently amended) An apparatus for providing a filling material, in paste form, for introduction into a canal of a tooth using a root-canal instrument including a screw which is arranged on a handpiece, comprising:

a plurality of at least one recesses, and a cartridge containing the filling material received in at least one of the recesses, wherein the cartridge contains a dose of the filling material which approximately corresponds to an amount of the filling material which is needed to treat and fill one single canal; [[and]]

a heater coupled with the recesses, wherein the heater operates to bring the dose of the filling material up to a desired temperature and to maintain the dose of the filling material at the desired temperature; and

a heat-conducting element operatively associated with the heater, wherein the heat-conducting element is a heat-conducting heating body, wherein the plurality of recesses are formed in the heat-conducting heating body, for receiving a

plurality of cartridges containing the filling material, and wherein the heater is a resistive electric element coupled with the heat-conducting heating body for heating the cartridges received in the recesses of the heat-conducting heating body.

Claims 11 to 13 (canceled).

14. (currently amended) The apparatus of claim 10 [[13]] wherein the plurality of recesses in the heat-conducting heating body are coupled with a single heater.

15. (currently amended) The apparatus of claim 10 [[12]] wherein the cartridge is an elongate vessel having a longitudinal axis, and wherein the recesses are [[is]] shaped to receive the elongate vessel so that the longitudinal axis is in a substantially vertical orientation, thereby exposing an end of the elongate vessel for receiving the root-canal instrument.

Claims 16 to 25 (canceled).

26. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 10 wherein the root-canal instrument is a condenser, and wherein the condenser is received in the cartridge and in the filling material.

27. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 10 wherein the filling material is Gutta percha.

28. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 10 wherein the cartridge is a hollow vessel fitted with a sealed closure for establishing sterility of the vessel.

29. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 28 wherein the hollow vessel is a cylinder having an integral bottom at one end and the sealed closure at an opposite end.

30. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 28 wherein the vessel is formed of a plastic material, for establishing the sterility of the vessel.